LP
F5012
1869
D515

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2013

http://archive.org/details/brokenreedsorher00dewa

BROKEN REEDS;

OR, THE

HERESIES OF THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN

SHOWN TO BE

CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE & REASON.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD HARTLEY DEWART.

They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.—St. Paul.
They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.—Jeremiah.
And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.—The Master.

SECOND EDITION.

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

TORONTO:

PRINTED AT THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE OFFICE,
KING STREET EAST.

Price Ten Cents.

[A liberal discount will be made to ministers and the trade.]

LPF 5012
1869
D515

1208909

BROKEN REEDS;

OR, THE

HERESIES OF THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN

SHOWN TO BE

CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE & REASON.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD HARTLEY DEWART.

They have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.—St. Paul.
They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace.—Jeremiah.
And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.—The Master.

SECOND EDITION.

REVISED AND ENLARGED.

TORONTO:
PRINTED AT THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE OFFICE,
KING STREET EAST.

Price Ten Cents.
[A liberal discount will be made to ministers and the trade.]

BROKEN REEDS.

I. Introductory Remarks.

During the past year considerable excitement has been produced in Galt, London, and other localities, by the preaching of certain "Evangelists," holding the sentiments of the sect, generally known as "Plymouth Brethren." Several small Societies, holding these views, have existed at different points in Canada for some years past. But the popular talents of the new preachers, and the fact of several ministers having invited them to preach in their churches, and co-operated with them in their labors, have enabled them to gain more extensive attention, than thay had ever before received in this country.

Having heard that they were invited to Ingersoll, the question arose in my mind as to whether, in case they came to labor here, I could conscientiously unite with them in their services. I was acquainted with the history and teaching of Plymouthism, in Ireland and England, and had also seen a little of its workings in Canada, and regarded it as a dangerous heresy; but some denied that Russell, Needham, & Co. were Plymouth Brethren. However, after hearing Mr. Needham preach, there was no room, in my judgment, for any doubt as to that point. Any one at all conversant with the theology of Darby, the Irish Lay Preachers, and the D'Olier Street Tracts, could have no hesitation as to the identity of the dogmas of the "Evangelists" with that unscriptural system. And the striking resemblance to the description of the Lay Preachers in Ireland, as given by Rev. Dr. Crook, in his "Lay Preaching in

Ireland;" by a writer in the *London Quarterly Review;* by the Rev. T. Croskery, of the Presbyterian Church; and others, vindicated the truthfulness of these writers. Here was the same flippant, easy, and withal earnest exposition of Plymouth doctrine—the same air of self-satisfied infallibility—the same "finished salvation" by a literal substitution of Christ to obey the law and suffer its penalty in the sinner's stead—the same hits at repentance and "doing" any thing in order to salvation—the same absence of any direction to sinners to confess their sins or pray for forgiveness, and of any explicit recognition of the need of the Holy Spirit—and the same evidence of a comfortable assurance, that they were lights amid prevailing ignorance of "the gospel." Verily, I was surprised to find so much Plymouthism crowded into one sermon. At the close of the service, the D'Olier Street tracts were distributed to the congregation, by boys at the door of the church. I felt the most unhesitating conviction that much in this teaching was unscriptural and misleading. A second sermon, though less outspoken in its Plymouthism, confirmed this conviction.

Believing that this system is contrary to sound reason and to the Word of God, detrimental to the progress of true religion, and misleading to the souls that embrace it, as a minister of Christ, "set for the defence of the Gospel," I felt that this heresy should not go unchallenged, and have made up my mind to offer to the public a brief statement of their objectionable tenets, and my reasons for repudiating them. I have no prejudice against either "lay preaching," "revivals," or "sudden conversions;" and no object in writing this pamphlet, but the defence of truth and the glory of God.

As I purpose reviewing, in a brief space, a number of important points, I cannot insert lengthy extracts, in illustration of this modern heresy; but I assure my readers, that the sentiments ascribed to them in this tract can be amply proved from their writings and sermons, and the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses. I deem this caution necessary, because they have no standards of faith, and their teaching is very confused and contradictory. When pressed hard, they are very ready to repudiate any authority

they do not deem it advisable to acknowledge. They have no name, no creed, no standards. If one of them be convicted of any error, you must not assume, without the testimony of competent witnesses, that his fellow-laborers hold the same doctrine. Mr. Darby admits "that in recent activities, Christians, outside and inside, brethren so-called, have stated many things less soberly than was right. They have pressed the love of God and the freeness of the Gospel in a way that would not bear critical examination. I have no doubt that such defects are to be found in their teaching." Mr. F. W. Grant, the leader of the Toronto Society, in his mis-named "Answer" to Mr. Crook, says, "I say 'we.' I do not by that term mean, however, to link myself with the Lay Preachers, as I know not who they are, nor exactly what they may have stated; nor do I mean to identify myself with D'Olier Street and its publications, any more than with Dr. Malan, of Geneva."

This style of repudiation is very common. You will seldom find any one, who will frankly avow Plymouth sentiments. They are now rather unpleasantly well known to be candidly confessed. This is certainly very convenient. But is it honest, or candid, for those who as really hold Plymouthism, as a Methodist holds Methodism, to try to make a contrary impression? Is there not more Jesuitism than Christianity in this course?

Some of the "Revivalists" repudiate being Plymouth Brethren; but if you take the Plymouthism contained in the Lay Preaching out of the system of the Plymouth Brethren, there will not be much left for the "Brethren." It is not very creditable to them, that, according to their own confession, they send out preachers without any guaranty, either as to character or soundness in the faith. And what must be said of those Pastors of Churches who deem this unnecessary? Formerly a guaranty of membership in some Christian Church, and a satisfactory testimony, as to moral character and doctrinal soundness, were thought necessary, before any one would be received as a reliable religious Teacher. But this it seems is now deemed quite superfluous.

They profess to have no creed but the Bible; and con-

demn all who avow a creed as putting human opinions in place of the word of God. But do not those who profess to have no creed but the Bible, hold doctrines, opinions, and views of Scripture which constitute an unwritten creed? It has been pertinently said by Dr. Kingsley :—"The mere act of clothing our *opinions* in *language*, which can be presented to the eye, does not *create* those opinions. It is the mere committing to paper of that which had an antecedent existence in our mind. Is any person so weak as to suppose that, after committing his honest opinions to paper, he has any more of a creed than he had before? Or that, if he should erase what he has written, he should have *no opinion—no belief—no creed?* Does it follow that because one person expresses his belief in the exact language of the Scriptures, when the meaning he attaches to that Scripture is totally wrong, therefore his creed is the Bible, in opposition to him who may have a perfectly correct view of the Scriptures, and yet express that view not exactly in the language of the Scriptures? If the object of a denomination be to deceive and decoy unwary souls, and to instil into their minds—in a secret manner and by degrees—doctrines which they dare not at once present to public view, this course might be well enough; but I confess I see no *good* object to be accomplished by it."

But, though the Plymouth Brethren denounce all creeds, all sects, and all comments on the Scriptures—*except their own*—and though their sentiments are extensively marked by confusion and contradiction, yet their leading principles are now very well known. They have a system and a set of dogmas by which they can be identified, with little danger of mistake; and the bigotry of sectarianism will be found among them, in its narrowest and most self-righteous type. Is there any denomination of Christians on the face of the earth who say more emphatically by their spirit and procedure, "We are the people, and wisdom shall die with us"—"Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou?" If there is I have never heard of them. The claim of the Church of Rome to infallibility is confined to Popes and Councils; but, among the "Brethren,

each "believer" speaks with oracular self-confidence. Modesty and humility are not held in very high estimation.

I have no personal feeling to gratify in speaking against this heresy. I have nothing to say against the sincerity, or personal character of its apostles, because I know nothing of either. In this there are a great many of their admirers like me. Hence, if I speak in terms of strong condemnation of the system, it is because I fully believe their teaching, on many important points, to be false—contrary to Scripture and sound reason. They complain of the *spirit* of anything that unmasks their sophistries. They may hurl their sneers at all who differ from them; but let no one, on pain of excommunication, dare to question the soundness of *their* teaching or the divinity of their mission. I have no hope that this pamphlet will suit either them or their admirers. A mild reproof to the cook, whom we found mixing poison with the children's food, would be somewhat out of place. And must I, for fear of giving offence to the admirers of "Lay Preaching" in Canada, "soften the truth and smooth my tongue," while they are, in my deliberate judgment, poisoning, with false and delusive teaching, the souls who are beguiled by their confident assertions and plausible sophistries. It is no time for soft speeches, when false teachers are sapping the foundations of church organization and misleading souls. Rather should we "rebuke them sharply," and "earnestly contend for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints." "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

II. Christians Free from the Law of God.

The "Brethren" maintain that believers are not under the Law of God. That being under the direct guidance of the Holy Ghost, and under the law of love, they are free from the claims of the law—that it is not the measure of their duty, nor the ground of their obedience.

The Jewish law naturally divides itself into three parts. The moral, the ceremonial, and the civil. All Christians agree, that the civil and ceremonial law are not binding

upon us. But the moral law, a summary of which is given in the ten commandments, and whose principles are illustrated and enforced by the precepts and commands of God in His word—inasmuch as it relates to the duties we owe to God and to our fellow-men, must continue in force as long as the relations to God and to men, out of which these duties spring, continue to exist. It was in force, before its promulgation at Sinai, or the organization of the Jewish nation, and the duties it enjoins are of perpetual obligation through all time. Those places, in which St. Paul speaks of the law as being abrogated, always refer to the ceremonial or civil law, and never to the moral law. I freely admit, that those who are justified by faith are free from the condemnation of the law; and are no longer under the law, as the instrument or ground of justification.

But the only sense in which a believer can be said to be free from the moral law, as a rule of life, is, that when the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, he no longer obeys the law from fear of its penalties, but runs with delight in the way of God's commandments.* All moral beings are under law to God; and it is as absurd as it is unscriptural, to say that a believer is not under obligation to keep the commandments of God, or that His revealed will is not the rule of his life. The declaration of Paul, "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace," simply means, that they, being no longer ignorant of Christ, and being delivered from the condemnation of the law, through faith in his blood, were, through the grace of Christ strengthening them, enabled to fulfil the law, as they could not do when they were seeking to justify themselves by their own pharisaic righteousness. This is clearly the meaning of Rom. 8 : 2, 3, where the apostle declares, that they were de-

* In the first edition, when I said "the only sense in which a believer is free from the moral law," &c., I was speaking of the law as a rule of life, and supposed I would have been so understood. My remarks showed clearly, that I admitted that a believer was delivered from the condemnation of the law, and from the law as an instrument of justification; but where many seem so willing to misapprehend my meaning, it would have been better had it been expressed in a more guarded manner.

livered from the law of sin and death, by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, "*that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.*" Are not the duties which the moral law enjoins just as binding on the conscience, after justification as before? How does the fact of our not being under the condemnation of the law, nor under it as an instrument of justification, prove that we are not under it, as a rule of life? The law condemns a believer, who transgresses it, as well as an unbeliever. It is only while we "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit," that we are free from condemnation. Grace cannot be a rule of life as opposed to law. As Mr. Croskery forcibly remarks, "Love cannot be the rule of obedience—it can be the spring or motive of it. This is to confound the railway track with the steam-power that drives the train. Love is the steam power and not the track. The moral law is the track, and not the steam-power. The law of love, therefore, includes the moral law." The doctrine that Christ as our "Law-surety" perfectly obeyed the law for us, and that his righteousness is imputed to believers as their own—or, as a recent defender of the "Evangelists" expresses it, that "He met and discharged every legal claim standing against his people," "so that they are no longer under obligation to obey the law in order to live;" and that they are "FOREVER delivered from its condemning power," is unsupported by Scripture, repugnant to sound reason, and logically leads to pernicious conclusions.

The mere quoting of texts, that speak of believers being delivered from the law, without stating in what sense they are delivered from it, proves nothing, as long as the point in dispute is the sense in which we are to understand these texts. The question is not whether or not, in some sense, believers are delivered from the law; but whether they are delivered from it, as a rule of life and ground of obligation. And on this point the testimony of Scripture is most explicit. Our blessed Redeemer says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Matt. 5: 17.) St. Paul asks, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we

establish the law." (Rom. 3 : 31.) "If ye love me," says Christ to His disciples, "keep my commandments." (John 14 : 15.)

All those texts, that make the ultimate salvation of a believer depend upon his loving obedience to the Divine will, prove the same thing. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city." (Rev. 22 : 14.) "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments.*" (Matt. 19 : 17.) "*Be ye doers of the word,* and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (Ps. 1 :22.) "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, *but the doers of the law shall be justified.*" (Rom. 2 : 13.)

The doctrine that believers are *forever* delivered from the law, as an instrument of condemnation, because its claims have been fulfilled and its penalties endured by their substitute, confounds moral distinctions, and assumes that God's approval of men does not depend upon their character or loving obedience; but upon Christ's obedience being imputed to them, as if it were their own. Surely the God of truth looks upon men, and feels toward them, according to what they really are; and not according to the unwarranted theories and inventions of men. If a believer is "forever" freed from the condemnation of the law, whether he break it or keep it, then he may be a gross transgressor, and yet be free from condemnation; sinful and unholy in heart and life, yet accepted and approved of God; because he sees him not as he really is, but complete in Christ's righteousness! These human theories are utterly at variance with the oracles of God. "Little children let no man deceive you with vain words; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. *He that commiteth sin is of the devil.*" (John 3 : 7, 8.) "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons *ye commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors.* (Jas. 2 : 8, 9.) "*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law;* for sin is the transgression of the law." (John 3 : 4.) "He that loveth not his brother *abideth in death.*" (John 3 : 14.) There are many warning examples, in con-

nection with the great religious revival of the last century, of persons who began by maintaining that they were no longer under the law, as a rule of life, and ended in gross wickedness. If, as Dr. Cooper asserts, "every child of the new covenant has the law written on his heart, and obeys it, *not from command, but from the intuition of his new nature*, he is raised above the necessity of studying 'the law and the testimony' to learn the will of God, and the way of life and salvation." If these Antinomian dogmas have not generally led to greater practical evil results, it is because the common sense, and moral instincts of mankind, repudiate the conclusions to which they logically lead.

III. Erroneous Views of the Atonement.

The "Revivalists" in Canada, in common with all sections of the Plymouth Brethren, teach that Christ suffered the actual penalty due to the sins of those for whom He died, and thus freed them from the penalty their sins had merited.

Mr. Needham, in a sermon I heard him preach, illustrated the statement, that salvation was by substitution, in this way. After a lengthy description of the execution of Jones in London, he said, he he saw himself in a similar condition as a sinner, with the rope about his neck, condemned and waiting to be hung. Mercy and justice had the colloquy, which we have often heard. They seem to be very antagonistic in some people's theology. He saw Christ coming down from heaven. He stood by his side, took the rope from his neck, put it round his own neck, the bolt was drawn, and Christ was hanged in his stead, and he was thus freed from the penalty of the law. This theory was so explicitly stated and enforced, as to prevent any mistake as to his meaning. A favorite way of stating this dogma is to represent sin as a debt due to God, which the sinner is unable to pay; Christ pays the debt on the cross; and the testimony of the Scripture, to the fact of Christ's dying for us, answers to the receipt, which shows that the debt is paid. Some, who do not hold the theory of a literal payment of the full penalty, nevertheless teach that the death of Christ secured the salvation of all for whom an atone-

ment was made, and thus equally make faith unnecessary to salvation.

All evangelical Christians hold that Christ's sufferings were vicarious—that they were for us. That he "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." But what do we understand by this? Not that he suffered the full penalty, that all men would have suffered in eternal perdition; but an adequate substitute for it; so that the penalty itself may now be safely and consistently remitted; which it actually is, in the case of all who are justified by faith in Christ. But the doctrine that Christ suffered the full penalty of our sins, in our stead, and cancelled our debt by his death, so that the law has no claims against those for whose sins he atoned, as commonly taught by the "Brethren," is open to grave and unanswerable objections.

1. *If it be true*, it renders faith unnecessary to salvation. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the nature of Christ's atoning work, it will be admitted by all that it is a finished and completed work. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." (Heb. 10:12.) Our participation in the blessings, which are made available by his death, is contingent upon our faith; but the atoning work of Christ cannot be undone by any act of ours. And if, by that work of atonement, he actually paid our debt, and suffered the full penalty which our sins deserved—then, whether we believe or not, we are not exposed to the penalty of the law. Nothing can be clearer than this. If our sins against God were of the nature of a debt, and if Christ paid it in full, before it was contracted, it can never come against us, even though we never believe it. Suppose a poor man owes his rent and cannot pay it, and that a friend pays it for him, and gets a legal receipt, and tells him that his rent is paid. Now, should the poor man refuse to believe him, this may deprive him of some comfort, that he would otherwise have; but it cannot deprive him of the benefit of what his friend has paid for him. He will never be turned out of his house for *that* debt, though he should never believe it to be paid. But this conclusion, that salvation does not depend

on faith, is false; for "he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3 : 36.) Consequently, the theory of the atonement mentioned above, from which it inevitably follows, is false,—a dangerous misconception of a great truth.

2. This theory of atonement, if true, logically and unavoidably leads either to the universal salvation of all men, or the unconditional salvation of an elect number. All for whom Christ has suffered the penalty, and wrought out a finished salvation, in the manner stated by Mr. Needham, shall certainly be saved. In its very nature, such a work secures the salvation of all for whom it is wrought. The penalty cannot be exacted twice. This is very clearly expressed in one of the hymns used by the "Evangelists" in Ireland:—

> "From whence this fear and unbelief?
> If God the Father put to grief
> His spotless Son for me!
> Can He, the righteous Judge of men,
> Condemn me for that debt of sin
> Which, Lord, was charged on Thee?
>
> "If Thou hast my discharge procured,
> And freely in my place endured
> The whole of wrath divine,
> Payment God will not twice demand,
> First at my bleeding Surety's hand
> And then again at mine."

But whose salvation is finished? If we say all mankind, then all shall certainly be saved. If we say a limited and select number, then none others but these can be saved. For none can be saved for whom Christ has not died. But as the Scriptures clearly declare that Christ died for all, if by his death he paid the full penalty for those for whom he died, Universalism is true beyond all question. I leave the "Evangelists" to select between the two conclusions. For my own part, I choose neither. I reject as false the theory of the atonement, from which one or other of these conclusions inevitably follows. Christ died for all. He made an atonement for the sins of the whole world. For those who do not believe, as well as for

those who do. But the world is just as guilty, and as much exposed to the penalty of God's broken law, after the atonement has been made, as before. It is the administrative justice of God—not penal justice—that is satisfied. Every legal barrier to the exercise of forgiving love is removed. But, notwithstanding this, those who continue impenitent and unbelieving will suffer the penalty due to their sins, even the wrath of God for ever. This theory confounds the atonement—the great provision of God's infinite love and wisdom, for the display of his mercy in the salvation of sinners,—with the actual bestowment of forgiveness. Christ's atonement removes the governmental barrier to the bestowment of forgiveness, and unfolds the infinite love of our Father in heaven,—the love that softens into penitence the rebel heart; but it does not secure forgiveness to all for whom that atonement was made. St. Paul says, "Destroy not him with thy meat, *for whom Christ died.*" (Rom. 14 : 15.) St. Peter speaks also of false teachers, "denying the Lord that bought them." (2 Pet. 2 : 1.)

3. I object to this theory of the atonement, because God's claims upon us were not of the nature of a debt; and Christ's work of atonement was not a commercial transaction, in which he purchased souls from the Father by his blood. This is a metaphor, and should not be taken literally. Christ was our ransom; but the Scriptures nowhere say that Christ *paid our debt;* on the contrary, Christ himself teaches us to pray, "*forgive us our debts.*" And all that believe "are justified," or forgiven, "freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3 : 24.) This view results from forcing a coarsely literal interpretation on figurative statements of Scripture, such as Isaiah 53 : 6, and Peter 2 : 24. In the same way the Romanists prove the doctrine of transubstantiation, from the words of our Lord :—"This is my body." But all our expositions of Scripture must have regard to the harmony of truth. This view of the atonement obscures the truth, that the Father is as merciful as the Son, and the Son as just as the Father; and represents Christ, at the time he was giving the grandest display of the love of God to our

fallen world, and fulfilling the will and purpose of God, in the most perfect degree, as the object of the Father's wrath, for an imaginary, imputed guilt. It confounds and obscures the proper unity of the Godhead. Christ was God manifest in the flesh. He perfectly represents the mind and thoughts of the Father. If he was spotless and holy, accomplishing, by a display of infinite love, the grand purpose of his incarnation, is it not childish to represent him as the object of a fictitious and impossible wrath? The thoughts and judgment of God are always according to truth, and not according to the figments and fancies of men.

It is well said, by a recent writer, that "it is possible to hold *a* doctrine of atonement, without holding *the* doctrine of the word of God on this vital question. And it is possible to say a great many glowing things about the blood of Christ, as the foundation of our peace, without presenting that blood in the same relation to pardon, and to the entire system of evangelical truth, in which we find it presented in the Word of God."

IV. False and Misleading Directions to Sinners.

The question,—"What must an impenitent sinner do in order to be saved?" is not one of speculative theology. It is a vital and practical question. I hold that, to this question, the Canadian Evangelists, and all the teachers of the Plymouth theology, give a false and defective answer;—false in what it embraces, and seriously defective in what it omits. Sinners are told *that they need not repent or pray*—that repentance and prayer, before justification, are not only useless, but "splendid sins;"—that they are first of all to believe in those declarations of the gospel which declare that He hath "put away" our sins and borne our iniquity, so that God has now no claim against us that Christ has not satisfied. To every point here I take serious exception.

1. I object that the thing which sinners are exhorted to believe, is not true; and if it were true, it renders faith unnecessary. I have clearly shown above that Christ's death was not the payment of a debt, or the cancelling of a penalty, but the removal of the legal barrier, so "that

God might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;" and the unveiling of His infinite fatherly tenderness and grace in the death of Christ. Hence, to tell a sinner to believe that Christ has paid his debt, and that God has no claim against him that He has not settled, is to tell him to believe a falsehood. Stripped of all confusion, then, this view of faith amounts to this,—You are saved because you believe you are saved. This doctrine is substantially the same as that taught by the English Rationalists, who say that all men are the children of God, only they do not know it; and that the beginning of a new life is the reception and belief of this truth.

2. But not merely is the thing the sinner is directed to believe not true, in the sense in which he is urged to receive it; but the idea of faith which it suggests is a wrong idea. It is merely the reception of an alleged fact by the mind: but justifying faith, while it pre-supposes the assent of the mind to the truth respecting Christ, is a full trust in the person of a living Saviour. The belief of the truth is essential. A sinner will not come to Christ, unless he is convinced that he needs salvation, and that Christ is able and willing to save him. But we may believe all that the Scriptures reveal respecting the incarnation and death of Christ; and if we do not trust in Christ himself we cannot be saved. A man believes a boat is trust-worthy, gets into it, and is rescued from a position of peril. But it is not his belief about the boat, but his getting into it, that saves him. An intemperate man believes his course wrong and injurious; but that will not save him, unless he renounce his vicious habits. The "Brethren" exclude trust, by the very nature of what they say a sinner must believe. We *believe* a fact—we *trust* in a person. Mr. Darby says, "I don't believe faith means trust; though I believe trust will infallibly be there, if faith is. To say that trust is an essential and leading constituent of faith, is different from saying faith is trust in Christ. I could almost assent to the first, for it (trust) cannot fail to flow from it (faith.) To the latter,—*i.e.*, that faith is trust in Christ,—I wholly object." This theory of faith makes the believer's assurance

rest upon the correctness of his views as to what it is necessary to believe and the genuineness of his own faith.

3. But one of the most reprehensible points in the teaching of the Plymouth Evangelists is that it completely repudiates as unnecessary Scriptural Repentance; which the Word of God distinctly places before justifying faith. Even when they use the term Repentance, they do not use it in its scriptural sense. What they mean by it, Mr. Darby says, "Is the judgment of the new man in divine light and grace, on all that he who repents has been or done in flesh." A sense in which the term is never used in the New Testament. This view of Repentance I heard Mr. Needham enforce in London. Repentance, then, in its common scriptural sense, they blot out of existence.

The "Evangelists" and their supporters represent those who reject their theory, as holding that Repentance means merely sorrow for sin; though they know that we regard it as that great change, which includes conviction of sin, sorrow for sin and aversion to it, and the purpose of the heart to forsake sin, and come to Christ for deliverance from its guilt and power. It is absurd to say, that because Repentance means a change of mind, it does not include sorrow for sin; for the question is still to be settled, what does this change embrace? To argue that a rational being can awake from his sleep of spiritual death, and see, in the light of truth, his guilt and danger, his folly and ingratitude against a gracious Father, and feel no sorrow and regret for his wrong doing, is an assumption so unreasonable, that it requires only to be stated to render its absurdity apparent. Can we for a moment believe, that the prodigal's coming to himself was not accompanied by sorrow and compunction for his disobedience?

Dr. Cooper, though a warm admirer of the "Evangelists," admits that he has heard them say, "that Repentance, as now preached in many pulpits, was little different from the penance of the Church of Rome, leading men to hell." Statements of this kind may help to magnify the importance of those who make them, and show the great need of their teaching; but they are not true. Where are the proofs of those unfounded allegations? They cannot be given.

And here I must protest against the unworthy and dishonest quibble, which they all so constantly flourish, viz., that to put Repentance before Faith is to say that a man can repent and forsake his sins without Faith. Now this is assaulting with great valor a position that no one defends. There is not a Christian minister, in any church in Christendom, that would maintain that a man can repent and forsake sin without Faith. All agree that a measure of faith is essential to Repentance. And the Darbyites know that very well. They ignore all degrees in faith, and speak of it as if it were one act performed once and forever; and then disingenuously argue, as if we used it in the same sense; as if when we argue that repentance comes before justifying faith, we maintained that it came before all faith. Faith may exist in different degrees, and have different truths for its object. Faith in the holiness and justice of God, and in our sinfulness, produces the feeling of conscious guilt. But we might have that faith forever, and without a full confiding belief in the mercy of God in Christ, we would not possess peace. But while no one will for a moment argue that Repentance precedes all faith, yet I maintain that the Scriptures clearly teach that Repentance of sin must precede that exercise of confiding faith in Christ our Saviour, by which a sinner is justified and renewed.* No impenitent man living in sin, and with the love of sin still the ruling principle of his life, has any Scriptural warrant to believe in Christ for pardon—while he continue in that state; much less to believe that his sins are "put away." It is only to those who repent and turn to God, as well as believe, that the promise of forgiveness is given. "*Let the wicked forsake his way*, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. 55:7.) "*Repent ye, therefore*, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the

---

* A "Layman," writing in defence of the "Evangelists," in the London *Free Press*, says, "The moment a man believes savingly in Christ, he repents, and he never does before." "Repentance does not go before, but follows acceptance through Christ."

times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." (Acts 3 : 19.) "*Except ye repent*, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13 : 5.) Paul declared to Jews and Gentiles, "that *they should repent and turn to God*, and do works meet for Repentance." (Acts 26 : 20.) Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, *Repentance toward God*, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20 : 21.) "The times of this ignorance God winked at; *but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.*" (Acts 17 : 30.) Could any language more conclusively prove that they have rejected the testimony of God, and are teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, who dare to say, that impenitent sinners can become children of God without Repentance? The facts of Christian experience prove the same thing. There is a transition period, in which a sinner passes from the darkness of unbelief, to the full light of justifying faith.

"But," says one, "was not the answer of St. Paul to the question, 'What must I do to be saved?' 'Believe upon the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thine house?'" Most certainly. And who questions the propriety of this answer to the penitent and trembling jailor? His question shows, that he felt the need of salvation—that he earnestly desired it; and that he was willing to do whatever God required of him, in order to obtain it. Is not this the answer of every evangelical Christian to every repenting sinner that asks a similar question? But did ever Paul, or any one else, possessing common sense, to say nothing of higher graces, tell any sinner that it was no use to pray or repent, till after they are fully saved with a "finished salvation?"* On the contrary, Paul, when preaching before Felix, or to the men of Athens, seeks to lead his hearers to repentance, by presenting truths appropriate to their condition, and says not a word about believing on Christ. And at the day of Pentecost, when the multitude asked, "Men

*As the expression "fully sanctified," used in the first edition, has been objected to as not in the religious vocabulary of the "Brethren," I have omitted it here. Though I am still at as much loss as ever to understand how a believer can be saved with a "finished" and perfect salvation, without being fully sanctified.

and brethren, what shall we do?" did not Peter reply, "*Repent and be baptized, every one of you*, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost?" Did not the Master himself say to the young man who asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments?*" But texts like these, that are not in harmony with the "religion made easy" of the "Evangelists" of Plymouthism, are never quoted, except for the purpose of being twisted and perverted to make room for their Antinomian crudities. I heard Mr. Needham distinctly suggest, in order to get this last quoted passage out of his way, that the Saviour ironically taunted the young man by his answer!

The fact that Faith alone, without Repentance, is frequently mentioned as the condition of justification, does not prove in the slightest degree that repentance is unnecessary. Justifying faith implies repentance. The last link in a chain of causes is often spoken of as the cause of an event, without mention of previous links. When we are told that a rifle was fired, we know that it had been previously loaded, although the fact may not be mentioned. If you tell a poor man, that if he call at your office to-morrow morning, at nine o'clock, you will give him a dollar. Though you have mentioned no condition but calling at a certain hour, yet it is clear he must awake, and get out of bed, and travel over the distance between his house and your office, or he can never call at the appointed hour. How absurd it would be for any one to say to him, "You need not awake, or arise; you have nothing to do but to call at the office to get the money." So saving faith in Christ always implies, whether mentioned or not, previous penitence and desire for salvation. If a sinner has no sense of the evil of sin, no sorrow for his wrong-doing, no purpose to forsake sin, and no sincere desire for deliverance from its guilt and power, how can he come to Christ and believe for forgiveness? I have no hesitation in saying, that any one who tells an impenitent sinner, that he does not need to repent and forsake sin in order to salvation, that he should believe at once, that his sins have been blotted out by the death of Christ, is a blind leader of the blind, saying, "Peace, peace,

when there is no peace;" and yet I have heard myself just such instruction given to the dying on the brink of the grave, by the disciples of this new gospel.

The reader will pardon me for dwelling so long on this point, but the vital importance of the question, the prominence given to it by the Lay Preachers at present laboring in Canada, and the fear lest souls should be misled by this plausible heresy, must be my excuse. In almost every congregation there are a number of unconverted men, who accept the gospel as true, and desire to get to heaven, but who remain unsaved. Why do they remain unsaved? I answer, the great hindrance, in most cases, is that they are the slaves of some forms of sin, which they are unwilling to give up. This they actually feel in their own consciences. In one case it may be dishonesty, in another licentiousness, in a third a bitter and unforgiving spirit, in a fourth love of pleasure, and so on, through the whole rounds of sin. Now, I ask, and the question is a very important and solemn one, can these men be saved and sanctified without any change in their feeling respecting their sins, or any purpose to forsake them, with no sorrow for past transgressions, and with no deep desire for deliverance, with nothing but the common, shallow desire for salvation and heaven which may co-exist with the greatest wickedness,—can they believe and be saved? The "Revivalists" say, "Yes; if they only believe certain alleged truths, they are saved." The Psalmist says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psalm 66 : 18.) The Redeemer distinctly declares, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. vi. 15.) The Prodigal reflected, resolved, "arose, and came to his father," and confessed his sin, before he was restored to his forfeited position. And yet Mr. Grant actually has the hardihood to quote the story of the Prodigal as if it favored Plymouthism! Trying to make it appear, in spite of the facts, that the father's kiss of forgiveness was the first thing that melted the Prodigal into penitence. Could language more explicitly show that he was penitent before he returned, that it was because he had changed feelings respecting himself and his disobedience, from what he once had, that he

came back at all? Is not his case presented by the Saviour as an illustration of the "one sinner that repenteth," over which "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God?" and does not the call of the Redeemer, "*Come unto me*, and I will give you rest," and all similar invitations, in beautiful harmony with the example of the Prodigal, make *coming to Christ* the condition of receiving rest?

But it is useless to quote the testimony of the word of God to those who, like Mr. Grant and others, presumptuously profess to know the truth by direct inspiration. The Scriptures are quite superfluous to them. I write, however, with no expectation of convincing the "Brethren." What has been received without reason cannot be expelled by reason. But I do humbly hope, that these simple statements of scriptural truth, may, through the blessing of God, be instrumental in saving some sincere enquiring souls from being ensnared with their plausible and dangerous delusions.

4. In harmony with their unscriptural rejection of Repentance, the apostles of this "new gospel" outrage scripture and reason, by telling sinners that it is no use to pray till after they are saved. It is not necessary to fortify this charge by any special proofs, as this is so commonly dwelt upon by all Plymouthites. It is not likely that even the "Brethren," gifted as they are in the art of repudiation, will deny this.*

God has appointed prayer as the condition of receiving His gifts; and the man who never prays for pardon will

---

* At the investigation before the Presbytery at Guelph, the Rev. Mr. Murdoch stated that he heard the Rev. J. K. Smith say, "Unconverted sinner, I implore you not to pray!" Mr. Robson stated that Mr. Russel said, "That except a man was certain of his salvation,—without a shadow of doubt,—he had no right to pray. His prayer was only laughter for devils." At another time, Mr. Russell said, in Knox's Church, "That to tell the unconverted to pray for salvation, was the biggest lie ever forged on the devil's anvil." A minister of another church, some time ago, wrote me, that, among other things, he heard Mr. Russell say, "You have no more to do towards obtaining salvation, than you had to do in making the world. All you have to do is to stand still and see the salvation of God."

never receive pardon. "Ye have not, because ye ask not," is a truth constantly enforced in the Holy Scriptures, both by admonition and example. Any who "lack wisdom," are exhorted by St. James to "ask of God *that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not.*" (Jas. 1 : 5.) There is not a single text in the Bible, that, by any just interpretation, gives the shadow of support to this human invention. There are, indeed, many portions of Scripture that declare that the prayers of the wicked and ungodly, who still live in iniquity, are not acceptable to God, but are an abomination in His sight. But nothing but the most wilful stupidity would confound the selfish prayer of a wicked and impenitent sinner, with the prayer of him, who, though, unforgiven, feels deep sorrow for his past sins, and breathes the prayer of his burdened and contrite heart, through Christ, to his Father in heaven, for forgiveness and acceptance. Could any one, not bewildered with the confusing puerilities of the "new gospel," have the effrontery to say, that the declarations that relate to the penitent sinner seeking forgiveness, are equally applicable to the impenitent.

This error, respecting prayer, is not only without the support of the Word of God, but is in direct contradiction of its explicit declarations. Did not the publican, before he was saved, pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" And did he not go down to his house justified as the result? Was it not said of Paul, as the expression of Divine approval, "*Behold he prayeth,*" *before* Ananias came to him and said, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord?" Did not Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, proclaim to the multitude the truth, before spoken by Joel, "that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved?" (Acts 2 : 21.) Listen to the Apostle Peter's exhortation to Simon, whom he perceived to be "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." "REPENT THEREFORE OF THIS THY WICKEDNESS, AND PRAY GOD, IF PERHAPS THE THOUGHT OF THINE HEART MAY BE FORGIVEN THEE." (Acts 8 : 22.) Poor Simon! What a pity that he was left to this "low Wesleyanism" of Peter, as Darby would call it! Peter was evidently not acquainted

with the "Religion made Easy" of Russell, Needham, & Co. What a comfort it would have been to Simon had he been favored with the more enlightened ministry of these Evangelists, to tell him that—

"Nothing, either great or small, remained for him to do!"

That Jesus Christ had already borne and blotted out his sins upon the cross, and that he had nothing to do, only believe the fact, and he was saved, now and for ever. But I ask the reader's pardon. Even this was unnecessary. He was already saved, with the Plymouth salvation. When Philip "preached Christ" unto the people, Simon believed and was baptised, and must therefore have been saved already. Well, we ought to feel thankful that we do not live in those dark days, when even apostles thought it necessary to repent and pray in order to be forgiven!

Mr. Grant carries this heresy concerning prayer so far as to say, that teaching souls "to wrestle with God for salvation," might well be called blasphemy but for the ignorance it displays. I think the blasphemy might be found nearer home. Is it a truthful representation of those who believe it right to pray for forgiveness, to represent them as thinking that God is made willing and merciful by their prayers, and that goodness in man is the cause of grace in God? Did ever Mr. Grant ponder the sentiment of Dr. Paley,—that "it may seem right to the wisdom of God to give us, in answer to our prayers, what it does not seem good to the same wisdom to give us without prayer?" Did ever he read the parable of the importunate widow? Or the circumstance of the Syrophenician woman? Or the declaration of St. Paul, that our great High Priest, in the days of his flesh, "offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death?" It really seems as if some people have an expurgated Bible; or else, on some pretext or other, they pass over and ignore whatever does not seem in harmony with their narrow misconceptions.

This gross error of Plymouth theology, that it is useless for men to pray or repent till after they are saved, arises from the unscriptural assumption, that the Holy Spirit is not

given till after men are saved. And, as man can do nothing of himself, it follows that he can do nothing before regeneration, acceptable to God, or conducive to salvation. They erroneously assume that there are no degrees in faith or penitence—that a man is wholly wicked or wholly saved. They talk as if a man, who has believed and repented in any degree, is saved; and a man who is not saved, can have nothing good in him. Then, with characteristic unfairness, they argue from this ground *as if nobody questioned it*—as if we, who believe in prayer, repentance, and the gift of the Holy Spirit to the unconverted, accepted their false assumption. Verily, this method of argument is more convenient than candid. Yet it is constantly practised by every Plymouth teacher. But I totally deny that man has no moral ability, before he is born again.

The fact that he is responsible to God for his acts, proves it; for there could be no accountability without ability; and no guilt in neglecting duties that we had no power to perform. The Bible clearly teaches, that a measure of the Spirit is given to unconverted men. Does not the Redeemer give us the strongest assurance that our Heavenly Father is willing to "*give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*" (Luke 11 : 11.) God gave his "good Spirit to instruct" the faithless Israelites, who died in the wilderness. (Neh. 9 : 20.) Stephen said to his murderers, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7 : 51.) But they could not resist the Holy Ghost unless he strove with their hearts; and our blessed Lord says of the Spirit, "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John 16 : 8.) This convincing and renewing work of the Holy Ghost, which takes place prior to, and in regeneration, the Plymouth Brethren, in the face of the explicit teaching of the Holy Scriptures, wholly ignore. If the Holy Spirit is not given to sinners before they are justified—to enlighten the conscience—to show them their guilt and need of pardon — and lead them to Christ, and enable them to believe on him for salvation, they can never be saved;—for men dead in trespasses and sins cannot repent and believe without the aid of the

Spirit. Mr. Crook, in his remarks on this point, presses an important question, which the "Brethren" will find it somewhat difficult to answer. "But what," we should like to ask here, "is *prior* to the exercise of saving faith? Is a sinner in a regenerate or unregenerate state? If regenerated *prior to the exercise of saving faith*, faith cannot have been the instrument of his salvation; if then unregenerate, how comes it to pass that the *faith* of an unregenerate man is acceptable to God, if *nothing* on his part can be?"

I need searcely pause here to notice the reiterated charge, that we, who reject these unscriptural fictions, and call upon men everywhere to repent and believe in Christ, are legalists, preaching that men can repent without faith, and save themselves by their own works. Is the rejection of repentance and spiritual influence, prior to justification, essential to justification by faith? Do not the ministers of every evangelical section of the Church constantly urge upon their congregations the importance of immediate decision,—the danger of delaying to close in with the offers of mercy,—the folly of trusting to anything that we can do as the ground of pardon or acceptance,—the infinite willingness of our Father in heaven to receive and forgive all who come to Him,—and the completeness and sufficiency of the atoning work of Christ? And is not our uniform answer to every penitent soul who asks what he must do to be saved, —"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved?" No one can deny this; except, perhaps, in the case of the extreme High Church party. And if this be indisputable, what shall we say of the untruthful insinuations and allegations thrown out in almost every sermon of the "Revivalists" and in every pamphlet of the "Brethren," that the gospel is not preached in the Churches? Are they true? Are they candid? Are they Christian? These people arrogate to themselves the name of "Brethren," as if there was no fellowship or brotherhood in the Churches but what they possess! They might be more truthfully and appropriately designated "False accusers of the 'Brethren.'"

Viewed in the light of the blessed truth, that God gives his Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, to enlighten, quicken,

and strengthen their souls, how utterly false and delusive is the Antinomian nonsense, so constantly repeated, that *we can do nothing at all;* that we have no more to do with securing our salvation, than with the creation of the world! Or, as I heard Mr. Needham state it, that to say that man can do anything conducive to his salvation, is to say that the atonement of Christ is not sufficient—that we must add something of our own to it to complete it. This doctrine is fully expressed in an Antinomian ditty, which was sung —*twice over*—the first evening Mr. Needham preached in Ingersoll :—*

> "*Nothing, either great or small, remains for me to do;*
> Jesus died, *and paid it all*—all that I was due.
> When he from his lofty throne stooped to do and die,
> *Everything was fully done,*—''Tis finished,' was his cry.
> Weary, working, plodding one, wherefore toil you so?
> *Cease your doing, all was done long, long ago.*
> Till to Jesus' *work* you cling, by a simple faith,
> '*Doing*' *is a deadly thing;* '*Doing*' *ends in death.*
> *Cast your deadly doing down*—down at Jesus' feet;
> Stand in Him, in Him alone, *gloriously complete.*"

This needs no comment to explain it. It has the merit of clearness. It is no use to say that it merely means that the atonement was finished. It says a very different thing. If it be the atonement, it is the atonement in an unscriptural and Antinomian sense, which amounts to the same thing. How comforting to the sinner, that had scripturally thought it necessary to "confess and forsake" his sins in order to obtain forgiveness! And this wretched falsehood is sung by "believers" and "sinners," as the truth of the gospel. I say, without fear of contradiction, that there is not a single text in the Bible in support of this teaching; and there are a thousand passages that explicitly contradict

---

* I have been accused of altering and garbling this hymn for my own purposes. I quoted it from "Revival hymns and tunes" published at the *Montreal Witness* office, without knowing that in Russel's hymn-book one line was changed—"nothing, sinner, no" being substituted for "remains for me to do." The version here given is I believe that most extensively known and sung in Canada. This hymn contains the very same sentiments constantly repeated in the preaching of the Evangelists. It is this fact that gives point to its introduction in this connection.

it. It is true of neither saint nor sinner, that he has nothing to do. The Bible assigns a very different place to doing, and places our works in a very different relation to our ultimate salvation from what Russell, Needham, & Co. do. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; *but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*" (Matt. 7:21.) "*Work out your own salvation* with fear and trembling." (Phil. 2:12) *Labor . . . . . for that meat* which endureth unto everlasting life." (John 6:27.) "*If any man serve me,* him will my Father honor." (John 12:26.) *And let us not be weary in well doing*; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6:9) "And behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man *according as his work shall be.*" (Rev. 22:12.) I ask any candid reader, who is willing to be taught of God, from his word, if it be possible for any sophistry or cuttle-fish mystification, even of those who have won the highest distinction in the art of "darkening counsel with words without knowledge," to pervert or twist these plain statements of Scripture into harmony with the sentiments of the above hymn? Language must be emptied of all meaning, before the doctrine of the hymn and these texts can be reconciled.

It may be said this language relates only to seekers of salvation. There is no warrant for this limitation. On the contrary, it is very clear that the theory of Christ's perfectly obeying the law for "his people," renders works of righteousness after justification not necessary to salvation. Believers are indeed exhorted by the "Brethren," to "work for Jesus;" but not because their ultimate salvation depends upon their "patient continuance in well-doing;" their salvation is fully secured. A writer in the *Canadian Baptist*—says that the believer feels "that by his union to Christ, he is no longer under obligation to obey the law, in order to live, that he is forever delivered from its condemning power." This plainly teaches that believers, as well as unbelievers, can do nothing conclusive to salvation.

But even if we limit the instruction of this hymn to seekers of salvation, it is equally false and unscriptural. Is there not something for every sinner to do, in order to be saved, which if he neglect to do, he cannot be saved? Is the

fact that every thing necessary to our salvation is done on God's part, any proof that there is nothing to be done on man's part? Though we cannot merit, or purchase forgiveness by our works, it does not follow that we have nothing to do, in order to obtain the salvation which God freely offers without money or price. Is there any Scripture warrant for telling a sinner, that asks what he must do to be saved, that he has nothing, either great or small, to do, but stand complete in Christ? If a king offers a free pardon to his rebel subjects, on condition that they lay down their arms, ask forgiveness, and trust in his clemency, would it be correct to say that they had nothnig to do in order to obtain pardon? Or would these conditions detract from the freeness of the unmerited pardon bestowed? Then how does our fulfilling the conditions of God's own appointment, detract from the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, or the freeness of God's unmerited grace? Is ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, doing nothing? Is repenting and being converted, doing nothing? Is turning from our evil ways, doing nothing? Is striving to enter in at the strait gate, doing nothing? Is seeking the Lord, doing nothing? Is praying for forgiveness, doing nothing? Is confessing and forsaking our sins, doing nothing? Is exercising faith in Christ, doing nothing? Does not our Saviour say "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent?" All these are mentioned in God's word as conditions necessary to salvation; but they are set aside, to make way for the unscriptural platitudes of the "new gospel."

A gentleman in Ingersoll, after hearing Mr. Russell preach this favorite do-nothing doctrine, asked him, "Do you believe that all men might be saved?" He said he did. "Do you believe that some will be lost?" He assented. "But," said the questioner, "if those who are lost could, as you teach, do nothing towards securing salvation, it cannot be their fault that they are lost; and the blame of their perdition must be with God!" I need not say that Mr. Russell could not evade the conclusion. For it follows inevitably from the premises.

Is there any scriptural sense in which it can be said that anything that Christ did, either in his obedience or death, cancels our obligation to do anything that we have the

power or responsibility to do? Will any have the temerity to say, that because Christ offered a perfect obedience to God, that we are not under obligation to obey the commandments and requirements of God? Even if Christ had never made an atonement, it would not "remain for us to do;" for we could not do it. I say, therefore, the sentiment, "Nothing either great or small remains for me to do," is as unscriptural as it is unreasonable and pernicious. It is nothing, whatever, to the point to say, in reply, that man can do nothing of himself. I have shown conclusively above that he is not left to himself. God has promised to "give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him." The power to repent and believe is God's gift, through his Spirit; for the exercise of that power man is responsible. The grace of repentance is from God; the act of repenting is man's act. It is sometimes strangely assumed, that to say any thing can be done by man at all, conducive to his salvation, is derogatory to the divine glory and the work of Christ. But if all our works are wrought through God's imparted grace, how does the accomplishment of what God himself gave us the grace to do detract from his glory? Does it not on the contrary magnify his grace, when slaves of sin "yield their members, as instruments of righteousness unto God?" Christ will not say at last, "Well done good and faithful servant," to any that have not done well.

V. Unscriptural Ideas of Salvation.

All the apostles of the "new gospel" teach unconverted men that salvation is a perfected and finished thing; that, as soon as we believe, we are complete in Christ, fully sanctified as well as justified,—put in possession of "finished salvation." In the Holy Scriptures we hear nothing of a "finished salvation." There is, indeed, the maturity of grace and holiness, to which believers attain, through the sanctification of the Spirit; but the idea of a salvation "finished" beforehand, and handed over, like a sealed parcel, or a finished garment, is no where presented. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." (John 1:12.) But to talk about salvation, as if it were an article made up and finished before

we received it; or to tell men, living in sin, that their salvation is "finished," is absurd and unreasonable. It implies a total misconception of the nature of salvation. What is salvation? I answer, it is a change of relation to God and of personal character. It consists of the act of God, whereby he pardons the sinner who repents and believes in Christ, and of the work of the Holy Spirit within us, quickening and renewing our hearts. Now, although God is ever infinitely willing to do this for all who come to Him through Christ, to talk of this work as "finished" before it is even begun, is, in the very nature of things, a confused absurdity. And then, just think of Mr. Needham and all the rest, proving this absurdity, from the words of Christ on the cross,—"It is finished!" Just as if one was at liberty to make the "it" here represent anything their fancy chose. No one questions that Christ's atoning work is finished; but there is not the shadow of evidence, either from reason or Scripture, to show that when Christ said,—"It is finished,"he meant that salvation was finished. On the contrary, it is clear, whatever was meant by these dying words, they could not possibly mean this.

The assumption that all who believe are wholly sanctified, is contrary alike to the testimony of Scripture and the facts of human experience. The main idea of Regeneration is the beginning of spiritual life. The believer is a "new creature" in Christ Jesus. And the idea of life implies growth and development. With this the Scripture images all accord. They all suggest growth and increase. "Being confident of this very thing, *that he that hath begun a good work in you* will perform it until the day of Christ." (Phil. 1:6.) "*Grow in grace.*" (Pet. 3:18.) "*Let us go on unto perfection.*" (Heb. 6:1.) "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*" (2 Cor. 7:1.) These texts show the falsity of that misconception of the nature of salvation, which they derive from their false and unscriptural theory of atonement;—a theory which, by representing a man's sins to be "blotted out" before they are committed, logically leads to the conclusion that no guilt ever attached to them, and thus opens a plenary Indulgence to sin, quite as objectionable as that of Popery.

Though God's grace is amply sufficient for every soul that lays hold of His strength, yet to say that the salvation of a believer is infallibly secured, is a doctrine which tends to promote a presumptuous confidence; and is directly contrary to all these declarations of Scripture, that make our ultimate salvation contingent on our fidelity to the grace received.

VI. Errors respecting the ground of Assurance.

The question,—"How can I know that I am an accepted child of God?" must always be one of profound practical interest. To this question the "new gospel" gives a very unsatisfactory answer. They reject the inward witness of the Spirit and the evidence arising from the fruits of Regeneration, and place the ground of assurance solely on those declarations of Scripture that testify to the atonement of Christ, and offer forgiveness through his blood. They say that a believer has just the same evidence that he is a child of God, that he has for any other fact mentioned in the Scriptures. But as every testimony in the Bible was there before he became a child of God, as well as after, the whole operation consists in applying to himself, because he has believed certain truths that he felt did not apply to him before he believed. But how does he know that these texts describe his case now? Simply from his own opinion of himself. This is surely arguing in a circle. Mr. Crook unanswerably shows that as there is no text of Scripture giving to any person by name the assurance of forgiveness, that the most such a ground of assurance can amount to is an inferential argument. Thus:—"Christ has promised pardon to all who believe: I believe, therefore I am pardoned." But this makes the sinner's opinion of the genuineness of his faith—which is the very point to be settled—the ground of his confidence that he is a child of God. Mr. Grant, in his "Answer," notices the objection, but evidently has no "answer" to it. Indeed none is possible. But there is now a people, as in the days of Solomon, that are "wiser in their own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." The remaining points I must touch very briefly.

VII. Views of the Ministry.

They do not believe in an ordained ministry, in any distinction as between minister and laity, pastor and flock; though in their own sect they have practically the same thing which they denounce in others. Their views of the ministry are similar to those held by the Quakers. They say that they meet under the direct presidency of the Holy Ghost; but that we, by appointing a pastor over a church, and to preside in our assemblies, put a man in the place of the Holy Ghost. Wherever they exist in sufficient numbers they neglect the ordinances of the churches, whom they regard as all wrong, and meet together in select private conventions.

As a minister of a church that has given the widest scope to lay agency, I have no objection to lay preaching. I believe in every man and woman exercising every gift with which God has endowed them, for the edification of the Church and the glory of God. But I cannot regard their opposition to every section of the Church, except their own little sect, and their opposition to the institution of the ministry, so signally owned of God in the past, without feeling that the success of their principles would be the overthrow of the different churches in this country. The ministers are the standard-bearers and leaders of the Church; drag them down from their official position, and divest them of authority to lead and administer discipline, and you will drag down the Church along with them, and lay her banners in the dust. Did not Paul ordain elders at Ephesus, and command Titus to ordain elders in every city? Is not a bishop, or elder, spoken of clearly as one who is appointed to the oversight of the Church? Do not the qualifications required, and the duties which St. Paul enjoins on bishops, conclusively show that they were set apart to a special office, and invested with authority for the discharge of its duties? Do not the epistles addressed to the "angels" of the Asiatic churches, in the Revelation of St. John, clearly establish the same thing? It may be said, that whatever may be the case in England or Ireland, that Russell, Carroll, Needham,

and Co., who are enlightening the Canadian churches, do not entertain such views, as they have cordially co-operated with the ministers of several churches. People must be easily satisfied that deem this satisfactory. They are not so devoid of all earthly wisdom as to denounce the ministers and churches, on whose shoulders they have been born into a more popular prominence, than they could have otherwise attained. Have they repudiated Plymouth opinions respecting the ministry? Though doubtless circumstances demanded more prudence on this point than on some others, are they not themselves self-appointed preachers, having no connection with any church, living examples of the Plymouth principle?* And as there is no room for doubt as to their real sentiments on this subject, the concealment of their opinions, when they interfered with their success, would not very much commend them to any who did not believe in Jesuitism. But whatever prudence may have dictated on this point, I venture to predict, if any permanent result remains from their labors, it will be found antagonistic to the ministry, and as a thorn in the sides of the church. "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" Neither will Plymouthism yield different fruits in this respect in Canada, than what it has borne in other places.

And yet the divisions and quarrels among the "Brethren" have been a sad commentary on their views of the ministry and their assumption of being under the leadership of the Holy Ghost! Mr. Grant, of Toronto, says: "*Is it presumption, if the Spirit of God has taught me truth, to say, 'I know it.' Does He teach truth in such a way as to lead me to say afterward, 'I do not know for certain if it be so.' This must justify me if I speak more positively than some may think becomes me.*" Such a man has evidently got a long way beyond the point where he could feel the force of an argument or of a Scripture quotation.

---

* In an article by Mr. Needham in *The Revival*, written this year, giving instructions to Evangelists desirous of coming to this country, he says that there is room for hundreds; but urges them not to come out connected with any church, as that would hinder their usefulness.

But though each teacher is under unerring guidance, there has been a good deal of collision and strife among the infallibilities. At different points there have been pope against pope, party against party. Mr. Darby says of his opponent, Mr. Newton, who claims to receive the truth as directly from inspiration as himself, "*I have not the least doubt that Mr. Newton had his system by direct inspiration from Satan analogous to the Irvingite delusion.*"

VIII. Various Unscriptural Errors.

There are various other unscriptural peculiarities of this heresy, which I cannot now discuss. They have a great deal to say about self-righteousness; but their exclusiveness, their dogmatic assumptions, their denunciation of the churches, and their unreasoning attachment to their unscriptural platitudes, point them out as answering very fully to the description of some mentioned in the New Testament, as "certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." The Bible says, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy?" the new gospel says all days are equally sacred. St. Paul says, "God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness." (Acts 17:31.) Mr. Darby says, "Apart from fundamental truth, I do not know a more mischief contradiction of scripture, than a general resurrection." Our Blessed Lord says, "After this manner, therefore, pray ye," &c.; but they will not use the Lord's prayer, because they have no sins to confess, and as it is neither suitable for saint nor sinner, it cannot be used at all. A believer is neither to ask for pardon nor the Holy Spirit, because this would imply that he had not already received them! Christ sent forth his apostles to baptise in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Some of their lay preachers—whether all or not I cannot say—baptise *in the name of Jesus only*, and with reference to his human nature only. They condemn all sects; and denounce all existing churches, for their sectarianism; and they attempt to cure this evil by forming another sect, the most exclusive and bigoted of all. St. Paul says, "Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith;" Mr. Darby says of self-examina-

tion, "It is absurd; for if I have not a spiritual mind, I am not competent to do it. If I have, the question is settled—does not exist." They say that the different churches meet in the name of Wesley, Luther, Calvin, &c.;—they only meet in the name of Christ. They reject and denounce all creeds and comments upon the Scriptures, as grievous evils; but spend a great deal of money printing and scattering their comments and crudities, which must be received without question, as the "sincere milk of the word," by all, who do not wish to be excluded from the company of "believers." The apostle says, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls as they that must give an account." (Heb. 13:17.) But these, like the false teachers of whom Peter prophecies, "*despise government; presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities.*" (Peter 2:10.) They condemn all as rejectors of the gospel, who do not accept their human fictions as divine truth. Mr. Needham, in a farewell fling at the degenerate Wesleyans of London, told them that John Wesley would not shake hands with many of them. I took the intended insult as an evidence that however benighted they may be, in Mr. Needham's oracular judgment, that they had been too loyal to the teaching of John Wesley, and of the Bible, to swallow his Atinomian crudities.

IX. Concluding Remarks.

Now, I ask, in view of errors so flagrant and dangerous, how can the ministers of the different churches consistently endorse and sustain the teachers of these heresies? The best answer that can be given to this question may be thus stated: "If some of their statements are questionable, they say a great deal that is true; they seem to be very earnest, and to be the means of doing good; and if the Lord blesses their labors, why should we stand aloof, because they hold some things which we deem unscriptural?" This sounds plausible. Let us examine it; keeping in mind that our charge against them is, that they teach falsehood on vital practical points. I do not question the earnestness or sincerity of these men; because I know

nothing about it. But it would surely be a very lame way of reasoning, to assume without evidence, that they possessed certain features of character, and then maintain the soundness of their theology, as an inference from this assumption. But what has their earnestness to do with the soundness of their teaching? Have not the most dangerous heretics, mentioned in history, been intensely enthusiastic in propagating their heresies? Recently a Roman Catholic priest lectured in Ingersoll, in defence of Romanist doctrines. I was told, by those who heard him, that he was very earnest, plausible, and, apparently, quite sincere. But would this justify any one in accepting the unscriptural dogmas of popery? On the contrary, a man's earnestness and sincerity will only make him the more dangerous, if his teaching be erroneous.

Then, as to the good they have been said to do. I do not judge or condemn any one. "To his own Master he standeth or falleth." We should expect, where so many godly ministers have been working so earnestly, that much good would be done. It will give me great joy to know that this is the case. But it takes time to test the fruits of all such revivals. And I must be excused from accepting the unquestionable genuineness of the work, and then inferring from that the soundness of Mr. Russell's theology. The good accomplished may have been achieved, in spite of much of the teaching, rather than by virtue of it. I heartily rejoice in every way in which sinners are really brought back to God. Still, there are several reasons why I cannot feel unhesitating confidence, in these revivals, as being truly scriptural in their character. The good, said to be accomplished, rests mainly on the testimony of those who hold views of conversion, which deprive their testimony of the value that it would have in reference to other matters. I freely confess, much as I would rejoice at the conversion of a soul, it would give me deep regret to hear that any friend of mine had embraced "the gospel" according to Mr. Grant. Does not the method of procedure, and the kind of instruction given to seekers, justify some doubt as to the genuineness of the work? The seeker is told that if he believe—not on the person of Christ, but—in the fact that Christ "paid his debt" and "blotted out" his sins upon the

cross eighteen hundred years ago, he is already saved. No giving up of sin needed—no witness of the Spirit—no evidence from the fruits of Regeneration—scarcely a word of the Holy Spirit giving grace to believe, or renewing the heart—no striving to enter in at the strait gate. It is no wonder that converts are multiplied by such a system. It is fully equal to Baptismal Regeneration in the facility with which it makes disciples. It is just the thing that sinners have long been looking for, viz., how to be saved without repenting and forsaking their sins. But I have shown conclusively, that the alleged fact, which they tell a sinner to believe in order to obtain peace, is not true, in the sense in which they use the words; hence we cannot avoid the conclusion, that the peace, which is the result of believing what is untrue, must be a false peace. Far be it from me to maintain that there is any unwillingness, on God's part, to receive and pardon *returning* prodigals. He is ever ready to bless, waiting to be gracious, full of compassion. But there is opposition and unwillingness to come to Christ, in the heart of sinners, which can only be overcome by the enlightening and quickening power of the Spirit of truth.

Racy and sensational preachers,—new hymns and lively tunes, new to many of those who have patronized the Revivalists,—and thrilling incidents and illustrations, may make a sensation in a community; but it does not follow that the actual good accomplished is in proportion to the amount of sensation. A shocking story—like what Mr. Needham told in Ingersoll, about the young lady that fell from her horse, and was dragged by the stirrup, &c.,—may shock the sensibilities, but we are not morally improved by the shock. I attended the closing meeting of Mr. Needham's revival services in London. There was a sensation —a crowd—good congregational singing—and a good deal of rather interesting, though flippant and somewhat slangy, talk from Mr. Needham; but any signs of the seriousness and influence, that are associated in most minds with the idea of a pentecostal revival, I certainly could not discover. The piety which Plymouthism produces is of a very narrow, morbidly-sentimental type, with a good deal of a certain kind of cant, and very little of manly, scriptural, catholic godliness. All the Plymouth Evangelists have a good deal

to say against self-righteousness. It should not be forgotten, however, that there may be just as much self-righteousness in boasting of being complete in Christ, and in assumptions of superior wisdom and goodness, as in trying to merit salvation by our works. Then, to say that there is a good deal of truth in their teaching, is a very lame argument. Any teaching, composed of unmingled falsehood, could do no harm. It is the mixture of truth with error that makes the error dangerous. Water is a pure and wholesome beverage; but it may be so impregnated wth poison as to be a fatal draught. So there is often, in some teaching, just enough truth to hold the error in a state of solution, and make it plausible. Has there ever been a heresy in the world, that did not embrace many important truths?

The ministers, who have endorsed and introduced the Evangelists of Plymouthism to the Canadian public, may have done so with a sincere desire to promote the work of God. But this does not vindicate the wisdom of their course. In some instances it may have been caused by a lack of reliable information respecting them. I cannot think that any minister, who was acquainted with the dogmas, history, and results of Brethrenism in the Old Country, could deem it beneficial to religion to introduce them into Canada. The Rev. E. Nangle, of the Established Church in Ireland, at first endorsed the "Lay Preachers," and published a pamphlet in favor of them, in which he said that he knew many a sinner had been brought from darkness to light, by their instrumentality. After seeing the results of the system, he published another pamphlet, in which he retracts this statement; and now regards these "believers," who boast of their "completeness in Christ," as still in the "gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity;" and is deliberately of opinion that the "movement" has done far more harm than good in his parish. The Rev. Mr. Branigan, of the Presbyterian Church—once their ardent defender—has, I believe, beaten a similar retreat. Such facts suggest caution at least.

However sincere the ministers may be that have endorsed the "Lay Preachers," doubtless there are some reasons which have inclined them to this course, that do not operate with others, who may be equally sincere in their desires for the

spread of Christ's kingdom. With our Baptist brethren the fact that they were exclusive immersionists would be a strong point in their favor. While those who hold Calvinistic doctrines, would naturally be gratified to hear some of them preached with an outspoken boldness, not very common of late. Be assured, brethren, you will get more than you bargained for, and pay more than you anticipated. Some Calvinism you will probably get; but you will get a good deal more. If the members of your churches, who have imbibed the sentiments of the Plymouth Evangelists, continue as humble, as ardent in their attachment to the church and regard for the ministry, as formerly, it will be something new under the sun. Some, who had to deplore the neglect and indifference of the people to the ordinances of the church—neglect, alas! too common—would naturally feel a degree of satisfaction with seeing their churches crowded, night after night, by an interested auditory; and their gratification at the result would naturally prevent any very close scrutiny, as to the means by which it was accomplished. The stream that brings water to our mill, even though it may be rather muddy, will have a charm for us that no other stream, no matter how silvery, can claim. Some people say in effect, let us have a religious sensation of some kind; as to the means to be used, or the character of it, these are secondary. Against this sentiment I enter my unqualified protest. The church, or the community, with which the love of truth and the hatred of error has ceased to be a strong and controlling sentiment, has already sunk into darkness and feebleness.

Should any who read this tract be still unsaved and unforgiven, a stranger to the joy of salvation, listen, I intreat you, to voice of your pleading Redeemer, "*Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Ask God to give you his Holy Spirit, to show you your guilt and danger, and to enable you to come to Christ and trust—not in an historical fact—but in the faithfulness, love, and power of a living Saviour.

Ingersoll, May, 1869.

JUST PUBLISHED,

AT THE WESLEYAN BOOK-ROOM, TORONTO,

A NEW EDITION OF THE

THEOLOGICAL COMPEND,

CONTAINING

A SYSTEM OF DIVINITY,

OR,

A BRIEF VIEW OF THE EVIDENCES, DOCTRINES, MORALS, AND INSTITUTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY;

DESIGNED FOR THE BENEFIT OF

FAMILIES, BIBLE CLASSES, AND SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

BY REV. AMOS BINNEY.

Neatly bound in Cloth, 128 pages, 30 cents. Per Mail, prepaid, 34 cents.

WAYMARKS;

OR,

COUNSEL AND ENCOURAGEMENT

TO

PENITENT SEEKERS OF SALVATION.

BY REV. E. H. DEWART.

☞ FOR SALE AT THE WESLEYAN BOOK-ROOM, TORONTO,

Price Fifty Cents per Dozen.